

Minimizing Family Conflict and Improving Communication-How the Discovery Experience's use of PRO-D™ Can Help



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Family conflict is often instigated by the re-emergence of long past, yet unresolved disagreements. Naturally clashing personality archetypes, assumed birth order roles and responsibilities, unequal parental discipline... all of these and many other factors may contribute to long-lasting conflict between family members. The aggrieved parties may even have forgotten the true genesis of the dispute, now simply holding tightly to the negative feelings that arise when in the other's company. Human nature tends to restrain our personal assessment of an individual to whatever it was during a specific prior encounter, particularly when the encounter had been an unpleasant or offensive one, regardless of the time passed since or the acquisition of new, contrary information about the individual.

Once, my uncle threw my Easter basket out of the car window on the way to the airport to limit carry-on bag volume. I was a livid seven-year-old, bent on revenge. His action was inexcusable, but was he that same man, twenty years later, who I chatted with at the bar after a cousin's wedding? He was still a selfish jerk but now, as an adult, I could see clearly that he was a sad and misunderstood individual, awkward and pushy in forming human connection. I had judged his entire personhood on

one bad day. I didn't bring-up the incident, of course, and forgave him in my heart, but he remains a somewhat suspect character.

People often change their behaviors over time, realizing some behaviors illicit negative responses, but their core personalities don't change very much. Most individuals have family members with whom they consistently clash. This is common and normal, but perhaps Thanksgiving dinner would seem less dreadful if we understood why that relative always seemed ready for a fight and what we could do to diffuse the tension. These prior disputes and personality clashes can inhibit progress in fostering an open dialogue pertaining to important family decision-making and planning. Simply admonishing these parties to, 'grow-up and get over it' for the sake of the meeting will prove unsuccessful, for what they require isn't a forced apology, it is a new, fresh and honest assessment of one another.

The Family Tapestry Discovery Experience includes the Pro-D™ assessment which provides clear, unbiased personality archetype data that may assist in explaining why and how these parties are in chronic conflict, when interpreted through an experienced guide. Many conflicts are driven and maintained by false schema, cognitive constructions humans form

about themselves and others. It's a valuable organizational tool the brain implements to sort information and to inform reactions. Unfortunately, it is a blunt instrument controlled by the most primitive part of the brain, is frequently inaccurate and prone to deeply held bias. The archetype data derived from the Pro-D experience can illustrate for these parties the misconceptions each has held about the other, illuminating their true motivations and perspectives objectively. Can you remain angry with someone you love after learning that the source of your conflict is simply natural human difference and variety?

The success of the Discovery Experience and its application of Pro-D™ in familial conflict resolution is dependent on the level of curiosity each party is willing to assume towards the other. If both accept with honesty that a fresh start is required and are willing to suspend their prior false assumptions towards a new, mutual understanding and acceptance of innate difference, conflict may be minimized. Accepting that difference can be the foundation of strong partnerships and developing respect for natural gifts you don't share or don't fully understand is the key to minimizing familial conflict.

